



# Bucks wary of new kids on block

## SOCCER

TTM out to make its mark in NFD

By MFUNDO PILISO and UNATHI MCHUMANE

**T**SHAKHUMA Tsha Madzivhandila (TTM) are looking to make a name for themselves in National First Division as they take on Mthatha Bucks tomorrow.

The Limpopo-based side opened their NFD campaign with an unfortunate 1-0 defeat at the hands of Cape Town All Stars last weekend and they will want to win this to make up for their loss, but Amatholamnyama will be up for the challenge.

Speaking earlier in the week, Bucks coach Ian Palmer was confident in his team after their 1-1 draw away to Tuks.

"I was very happy with what I saw even though we have a lot of touch-ups to do but it's still very early for us.

"Even though they were not as fluent as I would have liked them to be, their game was satisfactory and other departments are coming through."

Palmer said he would add more players to his side as season progresses and the team's development structure was producing talent that he will nurture and eventually elevate to his first team.

TTM is the new kid on the NFD block, after buying the league status of Milano FC at the end of last season



SPAR-KLING KIT: The Mthatha Bucks squad show off their new Spar-sponsored tracksuits in Mthatha yesterday

Picture: UNATHI MCHUMANE

when they failed to make it to the playoffs.

The team has hired former Baroka FC coach Sello Chokoe, as well as an experienced management team.

On the field they are led by former Platinum Stars defender Rofhiwa Tshikovhi as they will try to topple Bucks at home.

"We are here to compete - not to maintain our status, but because we want to see ourselves in the PSL in the next two to three seasons," the

club's marketing manager Nicholas Madzuhe said.

"Rofhiwa has got the relevant experience from Platinum [Stars] and his height works to his advantage. I think that's why the technical team gave him that armband.

"As I indicated from the beginning, we are here to compete and now we want see ourselves in position three because our technical team already gave players a mandate to say we need to come out between position

one and position three."

Madzuhe said their strategy was to get early goals to get the points needed to stay ahead.

Meanwhile, Bucks yesterday unveiled Spar as their new sponsor after the retailer donated 50 tracksuits to Amatholamnyama.

Spar retail operations manager in the Mthatha region Leslie Clarke said as the team are the pride bucket of the Mthatha community they wanted to give some input.

"At this stage, we can't be certain as to whether this is the beginning of a partnership or not, but the community is definitely our responsibility and with the team flying the Mthatha community's flag, we have to be their support system.

"The players also have to eat during matches and between training sessions. These are aspects we are also looking into if we were to broaden our helping hand towards them," said Clarke.

